

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 IO-06

ACDA-10 H-03 L-01 /046 W

-----058734 101249Z /43

R 100931Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5556

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 07670

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, RP, US

SUBJECT: CHARGE'S COURTESY CALL ON FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. CHARGE'S MAY 8 COURTESY CALL ON ROMULO WAS TRANSFORMED BY THE FOREIGN SECRETARY INTO AN HOUR-LONG SEMINAR ON US-RP RELATIONS. WHILE THE TONE WAS FRIENDLY, THE ESSENTIAL MESSAGE WAS THAT THE U.S. DOES NOT ADEQUATELY SUPPORT ITS OLD FRIEND AND ALLY. SUB-THEMES WERE THE ANTI-GOP BIAS OF THE U.S. MEDIA, NOTABLY THE NEW YORK TIMES, AND THE CRITICAL POSTURE OF U.S. OFFICIALS. ROMULO INDICATED THAT HE MAY STAY IN THE U.S. FROM THE US-ASEAN AUGUST MEETING UNTIL THE OPENING OF THE UNGA. WE SHOULD CONSIDER ENCOURAGING HIM TO USE THAT OCCASION FOR SOME CONTACTS WITH CONGRESS. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCOMPANIED BY POL COUNSELOR, CHARGE MADE A COURTESY CALL ON FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO MAY 8. AT THE OUTSET CHARGE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE MAJOR GOP EFFORT IN CONNECTION WITH THE VICE PRESIDENT'S VISIT AND INQUIRED HOW ROMULO FELT THE VISIT HAD GONE. ROMULO RESPONDED "VERY WELL" EXCEPT FOR CBS WHICH REPORTED THAT THE VICE PRESIDENT HAD "INSTRUCTED" PRESIDENT MARCOS WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS. ROMULO USED THIS AS A LAUNCHING PAD FOR A
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DISSERTATION ON US-RP RELATIONS LASTING THE BETTER PART OF AN HOUR. HIS ESSENTIAL THEME WAS THE FAMILIAR ONE THAT THE U.S. DID NOT APPRECIATE/SUPPORT THE PHILIPPINES IN THE MANNER BEFITTING AN OLD FRIEND AND ALLY. WE LISTENED MOSTLY, OFFERING ONLY A FEW QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS.

3. ON THE MEDIA, ROMULO SINGLED OUT THE NEW YORK TIMES.

HE RECALLED A SPEECH ON DISARMAMENT WHICH HE MADE AT THE UN RECENTLY AND WHICH WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY APPLAUDED BY ALL, INCLUDING THE LOCAL TIMES CORRESPONDENT. WHEN THE TIMES FAILED TO CARRY THE STORY OF THE SPEECH, HE ASKED THE CORRESPONDENT ABOUT THIS. THE TIMES MAN REPLIED THAT ROMULO SHOULD NOT EXPECT HIS PAPER TO PRINT HIS CONSTRUCTIVE REMARKS AS LONG AS HE WAS AN OFFICIAL OF THE MARCOS GOVERNMENT. ROMULO ALSO CLAIMED THAT THE TIMES HAD COMPLETELY IGNORED MRS. MARCOS' SPEECH TO THE UNGA LAST FALL.

4. HE NOTED USG OFFICIALS TOO OFTEN FORGET THE PHILIPPINES IS A SOVEREIGN COUNTRY, THEN DWELLED ON THE LACK OF SUPPORT AFFORDED THE GOP BY U.S. OFFICIALS. REACHING BACK INTO HISTORY, HE RECOUNTED THAT WHEN HE WAS AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON IN THE EARLY FIFTIES A GROUP OF U.S. CONGRESSMEN HAD COMPLAINED TO HIM ABOUT A BIASED, ANTI-GOP BRIEFING THEY HAD RECEIVED FROM EMBASSY MANILA. IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT HE REPLAYED THE GOP'S DISPLEASURE WITH THE DERIAN VISIT LAS JANUARY. IN CONTRAST TO THIS FREQUENTLY CRITICAL POSTURE OF USG OFFICIALS TOWARD THE GOP, HE NOTED THE ROLE OF THE BRITISH HICOM IN INDIA WHICH SUPPORTED THE INDIRA GANDHI GOVERNMENT EVEN DURING ITS MORE CONTENTIOUS PERIODS. HE GAVE THE IMPRESSION HE SIMPLY CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY USG OFFICIALS DO NOT "STAND UP" FOR PHILIPPINES, WHEN IT IS BEING ATTACKED OR CRITICIZED, AS A FATHER WOULD STAND UP FOR HIS SON.

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5. ROMULO HAD STRONG PRAISE FOR THE MANNER IN WHICH AMBASSADOR NEWSOM CARRIED OUT HIS ROLE HERE, AS WELL AS KIND WORDS TO SAY ABOUT THE WAY VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE HANDLED HIS RECENT VISIT. HE PRAISED THEIR COMMON REALIZATION THAT GOP FALLS INTO CATEGORY OF DEVELOPING COUNTRY--IN ITS PROBLEMS AND SENSITIVITIES.

6. THE FOREIGN SECRETARY ALSO DEVOTED SOME EFFORT TO BELITTling THE OPPOSITION. HE INDICATED THAT THE GOP WAS THE REAL FRIEND OF THE U.S., WHILE AQUINO ET AL WERE NOT. HE CITED EVIDENCE OF ANTI-AMERICANISM ON THE PART OF AQUINO AND S.P. LOPEZ IN YEARS PAST.

7. WHEN ROMULO MENTIONED HE MIGHT STAY IN U.S. DURING PERI BETWEEN US-ASEAN MEETING AND OPENING OF UNGA, CHARGE ASKED IF HE MIGHT USE OCCASION TO PUT FORTH GOP VIEWS TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS ON CURRENT SITUATION/PROBLEMS IN PHILIPPINES. HE DID NOT PICK UP SUGGESTION AND LEFT IMPRESSION HE UNLIKE TO TAKE INITIATIVE FOR SUCH CONTACTS. WE SHOULD CONSIDER WHAT WE MIGHT DO TO ENCOURAGE SUCH CONTACTS (E.G., LUNCHEON DINNER WITH APPROPRIATE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS HOSTED BY UNDER

SECRETARY NEWSOM).

8. COMMENT: ROMULO'S SEMINAR, WHICH WAS CONDUCTED IN A MEASURED AND FRIENDLY TONE, SEEMED DESIGNED TO IMPRESS THE NEWLY ARRIVED. HE INDICATED THAT HE WOULD HOPE TO HOLD A SIMILAR SEMINAR FOR THE NEW U.S. AMBASSADOR. TOUSSAINT

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, MEETING REPORTS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANILA07670
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780198-0514
Format: TEL
From: MANILA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780574/aaaackzd.tel
Line Count: 122
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3c4e30a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2737118
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHARGE\ S COURTESY CALL ON FOREIGN SECRETARY ROMULO
TAGS: PEPR, RP, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3c4e30a1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014